536 Less common are the Gergely járás play, a student
796 recruiting play performed in some places on March 12, Saint
857 Gregory's day, formerly the day on which school began; the Balázsolás, on February 3, the day of Saint Blasius, patron of children; and the Pünkösdölés, a Pentecostal play featuring the election of a queen for the day.

The children performing these plays collect gifts of food from the host at the end of their performance.

• 535 Folk dancing. Among the group dances of the Hungarian peasants, round dances are performed today only by children and unmarried girls, and are very uncommon among the men. Women never dance the single dances, which are reserved exclusively for men.

The most important types of single men's dances are the dance of the best man (vőfély), rich in improvisations, a few sword or stick dances, and herdsmen's dances. The latter feature crouching dance steps similar to those of the Cossacks. The most famous men's group dance is the verbunkos, or recruiting dance, which is characterized by quiet and graceful movements. The round dance is just one of the many figures in

the verbunkos. The bodies of the dancers are held erect, their steps are basically walking, and they accompany their movements with rhythmical noises, stamping and beating their boots with their hands. 535

In the dances of mixed couples, the man is always more active than his partner. When they separate in the dance, the woman only marks the rhythm with simple steps, while the man dances around her with more intricate figures.

The internationally known Hungarian dance, the csárdás, has many variants, but its basic steps are quite simple: two side-steps to the right and two to the left. The couples face each other; the man, with arms straight, holds his partner by her shoulders, the woman holds him by his hips. This hold may be changed during the subsequent figure variations, but the dancers always remain at arm's distance. There may be clicking of heels accompanied by the ringing of spurs on the men's boots.

The Hungarian peasant dances are quite different from their West European counterparts. They are dances with small steps, almost a rhythmical walking on tiptoes. Nor do they have a set choreography like the Western peasant dances (except

535 the verbunkos). The varied steps are repeated often, but without any particular order, leaving ample room for improvisation.

Besides the dances performed on special occasions (weddings, Midsummer Night), the csárdás is the only common social dance among the peasants. Indeed, its different figure variations may express almost every light-hearted mood. And when the gypsy band strikes up a "jazz" tune imported from the city, the chances are that the majority of the dancers would still use the csárdás steps.

815 Ethnographic and folklore research. The study of ethnography and folklore began, as it did elsewhere, during a period of Romanticism whose doctrine was the return to nature and the awakening of the people to the values and beauties of [814] their native culture. The Kisfaludy Society was the first to encourage the collection of folklore in Hungary, albeit from a literary point of view, and published the folk poetry collections of János Erdélyi (1846) and of László Arany and Pál Gyulai (1872). The Hungarian National Museum started its ethnographic collection, and scholarly work was sporadically undertaken in the 1880's.

10: Viski E-4, 5 (no date) 1932 EC1 Hungary EC1

585 574 music, toasts, anecdotes, these are its ingredients. When enough has been eaten, the effects of wine are dissipated in songs and shaken off with dancing. But it is still better if high spirits couple the two. Soon they had a slogan :

Host, have your house swept,
Have that long table carried out
And all the dishes and plates,
For dancing there shall be plenty of space !

• 535 Space alone is not sufficient for Hungarian dancing, it requires a great many more things. Hungarian wine is also important, and it certainly played an important part in teaching Hungarians to dance. This is what an old poem says :

We have had a good wine harvest,
It will give us full strength
And a great wish for dancing !

But even wine is not sufficient for Hungarian dancing, it takes other things as well. These essentials were enumerated very long ago by a Hungarian nun, who lived before the battle of Mohács (1526). According to her the following are the essentials for dancing : «the space shall be beautiful, wide, light and peaceful ; there shall be an abundance of food and strong liquor, the bodies of the dancers shall be beautiful, light, elegant and strong».

Naturally music is also wanted, and for some old Hungarian dances singing as well. Even in Heaven one cannot imagine — for instance — the «kállai kettős» (a renowned old Hungarian dance) danced otherwise than it is done down here, as without its peculiar music and songs it is no dance at all. «I wonder whether they dance in Heaven» enquires the Hungarian nun in her beautifully

10: Viski E-4, 5 (no date) 1932 EC1 Hungary EC1

●535 written Hungarian treatise compiled not long after the discovery of America. And «what kind of sound will there be while we dance? Will there be violonists, lute players, drummers, «cimbalom» players? Yes, there will be» — she anwers with conviction, — «songs are also sung while dancing».

The German author of the «Ungarischer oder Dazianischer Simplizissimus» writes about the Hungarians in 1683, in his 19th chapter: «Practically all their dances are ballets; they dance very gracefully and neatly, not like the Germans or the French, who think such a lot about their own steps». The German artist August Ellrich, writes in his book «Die Ungarn wie sie sind» in 1830, that while dancing the Hungarians sway so beautifully, that compared to them the Fandango of the Spaniards, the Saltarella of the Neapolitans, the Mazurka of the Poles, the Waltz of the Germans and the Minuet of the French are merely grotesque convulsions. All these are a long exhibition of clumsiness, there is only one real dance, and that is the Hungarian dance. It is the perfection of grace and charm. The Hungarian dance is a bewitching marvel. «A man» — he writes, — «who has seen a woman in her Hungarian costume dance a Hungarian dance really well, and can still quickly and correctly answer the question «what is twice two?» is a man, whom I, if I were a girl, would scorn as a lover!»

535 585 74 But for this dance it is very necessary that besides Hungarian high spirits and Hungarian wine the «bodies performing shall be beautiful, light, elegant and strong». If a wedding lasted one or two weeks, — which in olden days was no rare event, — it afforded a great many opportunities for dancing. And many were provided already before the wedding; there was a dance for wooing a girl, for courting her, one for getting engaged and exchanging rings,

525 one for the vigil (when they wept over the bride) for the
585 reception of the bride's envoys and her best men; one
for the wedding banquet; one at the girl's home, at the
574 first visit of the girl's parents to their married daughter;
one when the young woman is taken to church after her
first baby. The young, the old and the guests had their
own dances and what is more, the invited and the uninvited
guests had separate dances. During the marriage ceremony
there was the priest's dance, before that the kitchen dance,
the scarf dance and the present dance; the dawn-fire dance
or singeing of the bride, and in some parts of the country
many other dances as well. But all these varied not so
much in choreography, as in mood, because the Hungarian
dances offer an almost unlimited opportunity for improvisa-
tion, subject to moods and individual fancies. The bride's
dance was always slow (an old poem advises the bridegroom
also to be restrained in his movements). All the wilder
was the dance of the uninvited guests, who had to be
satisfied with one or two songs; in these the whole village,
any member of it, could take part without being invited;
and they did take part indeed, insisting on their right
to do so.

535 The singeing of the bride occurs on the second day
585 of the wedding. It is a ceremonious dance; they dance
around a fire lit in the courtyard, and the bride even jumps
over it, in order to free herself of all evils, as in the fire
jump of Midsummernight. At weddings the mice dance,
the candle dance and the pillow dance were often performed.
These were playful dances, they usually had their own tunes
and songs. The pillow dance was performed to this song:

In a lonely mill
There is an oak beam,
A little owl lady
Walked sprucely along it.

10: Viski E-4, 5 (no date) 1932 EC1 Hungary EC1

535
585 The centre of the wedding dances is the bride's dance : as we saw at the Matyó wedding, it must be paid for.

581 Payment for the bride, and a whole lot of other wedding customs, almost all of them in fact, have their explanation in the two ancient forms of acquiring women : kidnapping them and buying them. Tho this day the Hungarian wedding customs preserve many fragments and symbols of these ancient ways. Hunor and Magor, that is Magyar, the founders of the two sister nations, the Huns and the Hungarians, still kidnap their women according to the legend of the golden stag. Our laws of the 11th century vigorously forbid the kidnapping of women, and threaten the kidnappers. Later on, in a certain transition period, the punishment of girl kidnappers was not taken too seriously. The 13th century penal code of the Hungarian town of Selmecbánya prescribes that a kidnapper shall be punished only it the girl feels no affection for him. At the time of the conquest of Hungary — over a thousand years ago — the purchase of women was more customary at least amongst the more distinguished people. The Hungarian language still calls a marriageable girl a «girl for sale» and the literal translation of «vőlegény», the Hungarian for bridegroom, is «buying man». The purchase price of a woman was as much as her were-geld in case she was kidnapped ; the highest price was a hundred bullocks. Amongst the ancient Hindus the were-geld was a hundred cows, amongst the ancient Arabs a hundred camels, amongst the ancient Greeks a hundred oxen : hekatombé. At that time the girl's dowry consisted of valuable furs : it was on account of these that she was sometimes called Neste or Nyusz, the former meaning marten, the latter sable. The two daughters of Leader Gyula, who occupied Transylvania, were called Karoldu and Saroldu, that is black and white weasel. But the Hungarian word «hölgy», which means

1. See cat. no. p. 10 — Analyst]

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1

# DANCING

The Hungarian nation is one which likes expressing, 535
and knows how to express, its emotions. To do so it uses the interwoven trinity of word, music, and movement: that is, its language, its music, and its dances. It is a trinity which is one and the same thing looked at from a different angle, embodied in a different form. How original and how authentic are Hungarian dances we can conjecture and determine only from the knowledge of its language, which, in spite of the thousand-fold influences of as many years, remained at its base, essentially the same in construction and vocabulary, and of its truly native music, which retained the original flavour of its characteristic qualities, its flexions marked now by typical sombreness, now by irresistible fire and inimitable humour. Through this music there flows an electrifying, typically Hungarian rhythm, a rhythm electrifying in its way both in the slow and in the fast parts, as if it were possible to have slow and fast lightning.

Considering that the songs are the words turned into melody and the dances nothing else but the rhythm of the songs turned into movement, we cannot fail to come to the conclusion that the Hungarian folk-dance of today is, and can be nothing else but, the direct descendant, the immediate and authentic continuation of that of the past.

p 21

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 The Hungarian dance is actually and literally the embodiment, the physical expression of the Hungarian rhythm. Of old, most Hungarian folk-songs and practically all the Hungarian dance-songs have been in double measure composed in $^4/_8$ or $^2/_4$ time. In the oldest relics of Hungarian dance-music and in the Hungarian dance-music of more recent origin, this is the common mesasure ; and the rhythm of the Hungarian dance is perfectly in step with this measure. It is a fact that nothing else but the Hungarian folk-dance, with its basic one or two steps, can be danced to the tune of the Hungarian dance-songs, nothing else but real Hungarian music can produce the Hungarian rhythm, and nothing else but this rhythm can produce the Hungarian dance which is the immediate translation of the former into action.

No doubt in the course of eleven centuries the Hungarian dance acquired new elements as well as the Hungarian language and music ; but if it did so, it assimilated them so thoroughly as to make them well-nigh imperceptible. There are a great number of Hungarian showy dances in which the foreign origin and influence is clearly discernible, but not a single one of these is called or danced as *the Hungarian dance*. The real Hungarian dance is one ; its original sub-varieties are called in the popular language simply the Hungarian slow, ornamental, fresh, or fast dance, the Hungarian pair-dance or couple-dance, the Hungarian men's dance, and so on. One or two other dances, as the Kállay double-dance, the recruiting-dance, and some variations of the latter, as, for instance, the single men's dance and the Transylvanian barn-dance, are in fact nothing else but the original Hungarian folk-dance shaped through the long repetition of a particular practice (recruiting)

11: Karolyi E-4,5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 or custom (co-operative activities, barn-building, harvesting, etc.).[1]

Slow or fast, stately or furious, merry or sad, it is the instinctive and immediate translation of the Hungarian rhythm into the Hungarian folk-dance by the dancing individual. The steps are not strictly defined, the speed of the music is varying, but the rhythm is always the same. It is a rather difficult, complicated, and, in the lively parts, quite strenuous dance in which no two steps, no two movements are entirely alike. One has to be a Hungarian and an accomplished dancer to do it well, and it is well performed only when it gives the impression of absolute ease. That the best dancers are those who apparently dance with no effort holds more than good. The infinite variety of the Hungarian folk-dance makes people sometimes say that the Hungarian dance is indefinable. This is true to a certain, but only to a certain extent. If the choreography of the Hungarian dance cannot be put on paper easily, it certainly can be described closely and characterized properly.

Before going into a more detailed description of the subject we should like to mention that although when we talk of Hungarian dances we have in mind the Hungarian dance as it is danced today, as a living reality, we have attempted to place it always in its historic background. As a preliminary we also wish to

[1] "In the Pearly Bouquet, there were many people from many villages, and there were as many songs and as many dances as there were villages. To me it was as though they were all the same. I have got the feeling that I have already heard all those melodies, and that I have seen all those dances . . ." said Dömötör, old shepherd of Váralja, who never in his seventy years went beyond the pastures of his native village, until the day he took part in a performance of the Pearly Bouquet in Budapest.
[See Category 116, Pages 9-13, and 17-20 -- ANALYST]

11: Karolyi E-4,5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 mention that the Hungarian folk-dance has three succeeding phases distinctive in the flow of movements and in the speed of the identical rhythm. The first is the introduction, called the "slow"; the second, a sub-phase of this, is the development, the somewhat faster "varied", "complicated", or "ornamental"; the dance reaches its climax in the third movement, the "fresh" or "fast". The three parts are marked not only by varying tempi but also by diversity of movement. We can characterize this best perhaps by the names of the dance-steps in the various movements.

In the first movement, or the "slow", the dancer glides about smoothly and gracefully. In the second movement the dancer varies and complicates or ornaments the dance; he does it more forcefully and somewhat livelier than in the first movement, and that is why the Hungarian language says that he "puts" the dance. This movement finally grows faster and faster and more and more elaborate as it reaches the "fresh" movement, which is the climax. The speed, the fire, and the variety of the dance culminate in a furious but nevertheless dignified paroxysm, of which the sudden whirls, convulsions, the rhythmical dance-words — "rhythms" — and the endless flow of different motives are still marked by a sort of wild and lofty dignity. In fact, the men's part in the Hungarian dance is a vivid picture of the "he-man" who feels, acts, and enjoys himself without restraint of any sort, except dignity.

The Hungarian folk-dance is in its origin a man's dance *par excellence*, the dance of the proud horsemen, of always warring mounted soldiers accustomed to the fact that their might and superiority are respected. It is essentially a man's dance, composed mostly of men's solo dances even when danced by couples. The woman's

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 role is actually secondary; her steps are more simple, with toned-down variations, as if the woman's dance were only a reflex, the unessential accompaniment of the man's dance. Even today, the "slow" and the "ornamental" are still a man's solo dance; the "fresh" or "fast" is nearly always a couple-dance, but even in this last movement it often happens that suddenly the man relinquishes his partner to dance solo for a while, only to resume the pair-dance just as suddenly.

The Hungarian folk-dance music of today represents the technical refinement of primitive elemental rhythms expressive of the urge for the unfettered, a feeling inherited direct from their ancestors. The dancing it has inspired is the physical expression of this very same urge. It is most significant that in spite of the unavoidable influence and changes of a millennium, in spite of the growing speed and confusion of the modern age, the spirit of the Hungarian dance, as the Hungarian folk-spirit in general, has remained very much the same.

We do not attempt, nor do we intend, to give a technical choreographical description of the Hungarian folk-dance. Our purpose is to create in the mind of the reader a vision as plastic and as close to the impression of the spectator as possible by the minute description of the dance.

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The Hungarian dancer does not begin his dance immediately at the first strains of the music. Even in the regulated round dances the first few measures only help him "to get his rhythm". At the sound of the music the dancer straightens himself and takes up a proud, stalwart posture which he keeps until the end of the dance. Nothing can express better his feeling of freedom from all restraint than this posture full of ease and dignity.

11: Karolyi E-4,5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



Then, during the first part of the introductory "slow", 535
he balances himself gracefully on the tips of his toes, touching the floor lightly with his heels and swinging his body lightly from the waist to right and left. All this is done on the flexible tiptoe rather than on the sole, the heel itself seldom touching the ground. The hands of the man, when he does not use them for gesticulation, are usually kept behind his back; in the pair-dance either the right hand or both hands of the woman are on the shoulder of the man, but when she accompanies the man's solo, or during the movements which she performs alone, she keeps her hands on her hips.

After the first few lines of the song the dancers start moving with characteristic undulating steps; right and left, forward and backward, now and then stamping the ground energetically and clicking their spurs or the iron hoofs of their high boots rhythmically ("ankling").

This simple balancing step is then ornamented; that is, the simple step of the first leg is followed by a variation performed by the second. The ornamentation consists of lightly touching the ground first with the heel, then with the toe, sometimes with both during the corresponding measure of the music. The tune continues to grow livelier and to be interspersed with rhythmic variations. As soon as it reaches the necessary speed the steps of the dancer become fast and he makes sharp little leaps in various directions. During these hops the dancer "throws his legs"; that is, for every right hop the left leg, and for every left the right leg, performs fast rhythmic movements. All these hops, however, are in symmetrical pairs. From time to time the dancer makes a sudden whirl-like full turn, snaps his fingers, claps his hands, slaps his arms and thighs or, more often, his high boots, and accompanied by rhythmically pronounced shouts,

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 stamps the ground with his heels. The body continues to sway lightly and the arms become free: they follow the movements or sway in a rhythmic undulation up and down. Once in a while the dancer reaches to his cap and pulls it forward or pushes it back.

Up to this point the man usually performs the dance solo, but even should he dance with a partner, during the leaps of the "ornamental" he would release her in order to perform alone the figurations of his dance.

The "slow" and the "ornamental" are always followed by the "fast" or "fresh", which is a pair-dance. Sometimes it happens that the partners are ordered into couples by the leader, or, as he is called, the "divider of the dance", but more often the men select their partners directly. This they mostly do by a simple wink or with an inviting but very slight and often well-nigh imperceptible movement of the hand. Quite often the man just reaches out suddenly and, with a quick, energetic movement, grasps the waist of the girl of his choice and carries her off to the dance. They are dancing face to face. With her best kerchief in one hand the girl places one or both of her hands on the shoulders of her partner. The latter holds her waist mostly with one hand only and always with respectful tenderness. After dancing the pair-dance for a while the man resumes the hopping, those sudden small jumps on tiptoe during which he holds his body stiff and erect: he "sharpens" his steps. Now he swings it, lifting and swaying his body from the waist up, right and left. This "mincing" or "sharpening" is simple, or it can be ornamented with the scissor-like movements of the feet. The girl partner makes these steps in complete symmetry, but with more restraint and with fewer variations; she looks up to the man, and her synchronized movements are as if they reflected those

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 of her partner, their dance is bound together by the rhythm, but the girl's dance is only a toned down accompaniment to that of the man. After a while they reunite and swing, sway, turn, and whirl together.

Suddenly the man releases his partner altogether and takes up the ornamental variations of a solo. He balances his hands and arms, then slaps his thighs or the tops of his boots together. Sometimes he bends forward and touches the fronts of his boots, only to straighten himself up in a single proud movement, keeping his head defiantly up, bending it down or tossing it back violently. Again he gets hold of his partner and "skips and dips and dives" her, their knees flexing and rebounding like springs. Then he whirls her round clockwise and back. Suddenly the girl slips out of his arm and glides about gracefully as if inviting him in a coquettish flight. Now she "minces" it on a plate — that is, she turns in a small circle — and just when the dancer is about to regain his hold, she slips away again, enticing him to a renewed pursuit. Finally she surrenders, and the man, radiant with victory, whirls her around. This, and sometimes a peculiar "running around" in which the man turns round the woman who is herself turning, holding her outstretched hand, mark the end of the dance.

The Hungarian folk-dance is a triumph of rhythm which is omnipresent in the music, in the movement. It is enhanced and accentuated by the clicking of spurs and heels, snapping of fingers and clapping of hands, and, above all, by the peculiar rhythmic calls of the man known as *rigmus*, which is a corruption of the Latin *ritmus*, meaning rhythm. Of these sprightly little sentences some are widely used, others are invented by the dancer at the appropriate moment. They are called out with gusto and rhythm, thereby lending stress to the pulsation

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



of the music. It is amusing to hear most of them, and they reflect very favourably upon the Hungarian peasant dancer. These rhythmic dance-words usually have sense, somethimes direct and very appropriate sense; they again may be simply euphonic combinations of words. 535

Through a few examples we shall attempt to render the flavour of this colourful feature of the Hungarian dance.

When he is contented and happy with the partner of his choice the man would say something like this :

Neither too big, nor too small,
Sweet little thing, for you I fall.

You are sweet and you are clever,
I want to keep you mine for ever.

Your little waist-line is so slender
To embrace it my arms I tender.

When disappointed by the chosen or the given partner, he does not hesitate to say so :

She is dry and she is old,
Oh, why have I not been told?

Throughout the dance he encourages and spurs himself and his partner to do the dance as he feels it should be done:

Dip it, hop it, speed that twirl,
Until all petticoats whirl.

I wish you would lose your leg
If you don't speed up that step.

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 193? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 In this dance there are no borders,
From nobody take I orders.

The importance of these dance-words is reflected in the popular sentence which maintains that "without the words a dance is not a dance". Truly enough, by the judicious selection and proper ordering of the dance-words, it would be possible to reconstruct the whole Hungarian folk-dance phase by phase, step by step.

The introductory "slow", the "ornamental" development, and the concluding "fast", the men's solos and the role of the partners in the couple-dance, the proud posture and the leading role of the man, the secondary but extremely lovely role of the woman, the Hungarian dance-step, now in its gracefully balanced floating, now in its skipping, tapping, diving, and its romping hops, the play of the arms and hands, the clicking of spurs and heels, the whirling turns, and finally the dance-words — all make the Hungarian folk-dance something as unique, as typical and artistic, and as highly developed as are the two other natural expressions of the Hungarian folk-spirit: the Hungarian tongue and Hungarian music.

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[175] The Hungarians conquered their land in 896 A. D., and for nearly a century they continued raiding a frightened Europe from Spain to the Baltic. In the chronicle of St. Gallen, written by Brother Eckehard in 926, we find the first known record about Hungarian dancing. A raiding party of Hungarians had fallen upon the Abbey of St. Gallen, and to placate them the frightened monks offered them the choice of their treasury or their equally treasured wine-cellars. The raiders chose the second, whereupon "they started a jolly, good merry dance before their leaders", according to the chronicle.

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



The next mention of Hungarian dancing we find in the minutes of the Synod of Buda held in 1279. This passage directs the pastors to stop the practice of dancing in the church or in the churchyard, a custom which outlived the order and is found in a mitigated form even today in a few Hungarian regions. The next reference is found in the famous Illuminated Chronicle of Vienna (1348), a valuable source of early Hungarian history. It states that in celebration of the victory of the allied forces of Rudolf of Habsburg and Ladislas IV of Hungary over Ottokar II, King of Bohemia, in 1278, Ladislas proclaimed a national holiday on which nothing else was to be done but dancing . . .

With the strengthening of Western Christianity and the puritan ideals of the Reformation we find a great many references to dancing, mostly in the form of ecclesiastical admonitions to the people.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, a preacher blames the girls of the age for being much too industrious in the dance. Another of these admonitions refers to the "dance of the Black Army", *i. e.*, the famous army of mercenaries of King Mathias, constituted in the 1450's, which was perhaps the first regular standing army of Europe. In 1526, during the tragic battle of Mohács, which led to the prolonged invasion of Hungary by the Turks, one of the roused Hungarian noblemen blames the loss of the country on the "damned dancing king, who has lost his life in the headlong flight". In 1552 a churchman complains that the youth spent its time dancing in the spinnery "sometimes as late as midnight" (something to surprise the parents of modern girls); another in 1582 calls dancing one of the gravest Hungarian sins, and a hundred years later a preacher terms dancing the chief pest of the age. All through

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 the seventeenth century such admonitions are legion. From these we know that in her exuberance one lady danced herself to death, that the young folk could never dance enough, and that in this respect the old were "just as bad" as the young. We read that those who could not lift their legs because of age "tried to do the dance with their fingers on the table". Most of these admonitions are addressed to the common peasant folk, but in many instances the nobility was not spared either.

That this attitude could not possibly have been universal is well illustrated by the meditation about dancing on earth and in Heaven by a pious Dominican nun put down at the beginning of the sixteenth century. She asked and answered the question of what is necessary for a good dance. "A nice, roomy, clear, and clean place; peace, good food, and plenty to drink; a beautiful, strong, flexible, and graceful body" — and the like she found. "As all these things will be plentiful in Heaven, it is clear that there will be dancing, too." She adds that "music will be made by the lyra, the violin, the cymbalum, and the drum, and the words of the dance will be told also..."

Two hundred years later a famous preacher of his time, addressing his congregation, proved with his quotations from the Scriptures that there would be dancing in Heaven. Therefrom he concluded that this was one more reason for longing for Heaven and for considering this earthly life nothing but a dancing-school!

Both these admonitions and encouragements throw a vivid light on the important role of dancing in the lives of the common folk. As we can see, it was one of the most universal means for the expression of their emotions. Then, as now, there were no events of importance,

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



gay or sad, which were not celebrated with music, singing and dancing: celebrations which we regard as essentially social functions, as well as the universal form of popular rejoicing from childbirth through courtship and marriage to death. We find them dancing before going to war, recruiting, at the conclusion of peace, at various semi-private and communal activities; and on every other conceivable occasion, of which harvest, vintage, corn-husking, sale of the crop, of wine, or of animals, the killing of the pig, and spinning, and village fairs and *kermesses* are only the most typical examples. There are also the various forms of voluntary co-operative help, such as building a fellow villager's house or barn, the termination of which is as good a reason as any for celebrating.[1]

Naturally, dancing as a spontaneous and primitive expression of emotion plays a more important role in the life of the primitive folk than in the life of the higher social classes, but just as primitive culture is at the source of more developed ones, so folk-dances are nearly always the basis of the more refined and more sophisticated dances of the higher circles. Until well into the sixteenth century Hungary was a national kingdom, and even from then on until the end of the seventeenth century the Viennese court life of its Habsburg kings remained without much influence upon the life of Hungarian nobility.

Only after the liberation of Buda and the rest of the country from the Turks at the end of the seventeenth

[1] There is nothing new under the sun, and those who think that the barn-dance is a genuine American invention are only partly right. The ancestral custom of barn-dancing in Hungarian Transylvania after the community gave a hand to one of its members in need precedes its American counterpart by a thousand years.

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries were the Hungarian aristocrats — many of whom were newly settled and richly endowed foreigners — gradually attracted to the Royal and Imperial Court of Vienna. Throughout history, and even today, the landed Hungarian nobleman spends his life on his estate among the peasantry, and their lives are bound together by the same national feeling and the same material interests. We have a great many recordings in various sources of the fact that the Hungarian noblemen often took part in the celebrations of the common folk, and even *vice versa*. Our sources disclose that they participated in each other's dances with natural ease. We can see from this that not only throughout Hungarian history, but even in the various social strata of Hungarian society, the Hungarian dance has always been essentially the same. Few nations of Europe have had as restless a history as Hungary so it is all the more surprising that its original institutions have been kept and developed up to our days in such a straight line.

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We have described the Hungarian folk-dance closely and dealt at length with its origin, its spirit, and its identity. What has been said above throws some light upon the sentimental and psychological role of dancing in Hungarian history. Let us now look further into the various phases of its role in Hungary's national existence and attempt to trace its physical development.

[181] We know that the Hungarians were a race of warriors, horsemen from among the best; proud, impulsive, gay, and human. These characteristics are always apparent in the original Hungarian dances, even today, when horseback riding is not so universal as it used to be, and in

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



spite of the fact that for the last century Hungary has known a relatively peaceful period disrupted only by the disaster of the Great War. But today as yesterday, the Hungarian peasant makes the best and smartest Hussar in the world. By enlisting in the cavalry the Hungarian returns to his natural element, to which his being reacts in the same way as it reacts to the rhythm of the Hungarian word or of Hungarian music.

We mentioned above the dance of Hungarian raiders at St. Gallen in 926, and we quoted the medieval preacher's remarks about the dances in the spinnery which, in his words, were the dances of the Black Army. The Black Army, set up in 1459, consisted of two parts; the Czech and Serbian mercenaries, who composed the regiments of foot-soldiers, and more than double the number of light Hungarian cavalry organized on the model of the old Hungarian cavalry. Until its dispersion and disintegration after King Mathias' death, the Black Army was one of the greatest regular armies of all times. Its Hungarian cavalry was the forebear and model of all Hussar regiments in the world up to our days, in organization, outfit, and appearance. As recently as the Napoleonic Wars the Hussar regiments of foreign countries were largely composed of Hungarians. The famous French Hussars of Louis XIII, Richelieu, and Villars, those of the Prussian Ziethen and of Maria Theresa were composed nearly exclusively of Hungarians. After Rákóczi was defeated by the Habsburgs in his war of liberty, one of his lieutenants, Bercsényi, emigrated to France to become Commander of the Guard of Louis XIV. Bercsényi organized Louis XIV's famous Hungarian Hussars and was given the utmost military honour — that of Maréchal de France. Many Hungarian Hussars went to the United States with Lafayette, Rochambeau, and Lauzun

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



and took a prominent part in the liberation of America. Of these, Colonel Kovács and Captain Poleretzky were the most prominent. The Hussars of Victor Emanuel and of Garibaldi were mostly Hungarians, and about 1840, Hungarian cavalry officers visiting England were amazed to find that the organization and equipment of British Hussars were exactly the same as that of their early Hungarian models.

Parallel with the Hungarian Hussars developed the history of the Hungarian foot-soldier, which from the fifteenth to the early eighteenth century, unlike the regularly organized Hungarian cavalry, consisted preponderantly of foreign mercenary elements. It is useful to take good note of these facts because they are necessary for the proper understanding of Hungarian folk-dancing. From the fifteenth to the early eighteenth century the foot-soldiers in the Hungarian armies were mostly mercenaries recruited from rootless Slav elements. Naturally this must have shown in their celebrations and dances, which had many Slav characteristics. The foot-soldiers' dance which developed and flourished in this period was known in Hungary and abroad as the Hajdu or Hayduck dance, from the collective name of cattle-drovers, among whom there were many Slavs, and whose role and number in the Hungarian foot-regiments were important. This dance flourished only as long as the mercenary foot-regiments existed. With their discontinuation it soon fell into oblivion.

Not so the dances of the mounted soldiers. The idea of the Hussar and the idea of the Hungarian horseman are, so to say, synonymous. As the Hussar is the direct continuation of the mounted Hungarian soldier, so the Hungarian folk-dance is the natural product of the Hungarian horsemen's celebration, a direct descendant of

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



the ancestral horsemen's dance, which has become an organic element of Hungarian national life. The Hungarian dancer dances in an erect, proudly dignified, and even defiant posture. As told, the foot soldiers of the medieval Hungarian armies danced differently, and their dance had many foreign features, such as the squatting, characteristic of the Slav tribes surrounding Hungary who lived and fought on foot. It was only natural that with the dissolution of the mercenary foot-regiments the practice and the memory of their dances were soon forgotten. The only surviving trace of their dance is found today in the dance of the pig-herders and sometimes shepherds of a few regions, herders and shepherds who, in contrast to the Hungarian cowboy and horse-herder, do not ride and were never enrolled as Hussars.

The Hussar is the natural product of the Hungarian race and its ways of life. Nobody else but the Hungarian lads were ever considered good enough to make Hussars in Hungary, and, as we have seen, even abroad. Recruiting ordinances and conventions from the early sixteenth century specify that none but Hungarians may be recruited for Hussars, and a Hungarian newspaper article of 1789 states that "the Austrian Emperor's recruiters are beating the land, but *no Slovaks, no Germans, and no redheads will be accepted* . . ." The famous Hungarian Hussar general and poet, Count Gvadányi, in a poem from 1793, puts the following illuminating words into a recruiting sergeant's mouth: "Say, Lieutenant! Look at that lad! He is a Hungarian, and that is why he is worth a lot of newcomers! His place is among us, and we will sign him up at once!" The "newcomers" were Slovak, German, Serbian, and Roumanian immigrants, who came to Hungary first in their flight before the Turk or after the withdrawal of the Turk to replace the Hun-

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 garian population so terribly devastated during two
702 centuries of continuous warfare.

The whole institution of recruiting was based on the Hungarian folk-dance — partly because of the universally known and proved fact that a good dancer made a good horseman and thus a good Hussar, but also because the recruiters, who were shrewd practical psychologists, knew that the dance-loving Hungarian lads would be unable to resist the lure of Hungarian music and the enticement of the dance. They knew that the enchanted lads would sign up sooner in the self-intoxicated state of the dance than under any other form of persuasion. So recruiting always appeared in the form of a brilliant little military pageant with a gay itinerant celebration carrying an appeal to instinct and imagination, which Hungarian youth could not resist. It was built upon the Hungarian folk-dance, which stirred the senses of the most desirable recruit, that of the enterprising and light-hearted Hungarian peasant lad who loved to dance and knew how to do it.

The coming of the recruiters was a thrilling event The recruiting gang, a group of stalwart young Hussars clad in brilliant new uniforms, with spurs clicking on their shiny high boots, were smart to the utmost according to all standards. The rattling of heavy cavalry sabres, the rhythmic swing of sabretaches, the sway of snow-white heron egrets on scarlet shakos, and the haughty, light-hearted demeanour of the recruiters formed a sight which thrilled the imagination.

What recruiting really meant is clearly reflected in the literature full of colour and life of the period. One of the foremost Hungarian poets of the time, Joseph Gvadányi, was a Hussar general, in his youth a popular recruiting officer; another, G. Czuczor, was son of a famous recruiting corporal, himself an excellent dancer.

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



Their poetic descriptions of the recruiting dance are so vivid, so detailed, and so accurate that their reading instantly brings back to life this peculiar Hungarian institution. In Gvadányi's poems we read that at just the right moment the music of the gypsy band struck up, the recruiters took their positions, and when they began to dance the audience was gaping with admiration, beaming with delight. Some of the livelier lads among the onlookers started to click the rhythm with their heels and gradually began to "put" the figurations of the dance. Cleverly the recruiting sergeant approached the best-looking of these lads and, in his glib-tongued way, told the awed youngsters all about the miraculous beauties of Hussar-life. He offered them a drink, pressed a shiny new silver dollar into their hands, surreptitiously put shakos on their heads, and drew them, as if by chance, closer and closer into the dancing-circles. Before they realized it, the lads were signed up, and off they went with the recruiters.

Because it is so illuminating we quote in full Czuczor's more technical description of the recruiting-dance as he saw it done by his father and as he danced it himself at the height of the vogue of professional dancing:

> We are standing in the market place of a small rural community where the peasantry of the environs gather. All at once from behind the picturesque throng, we hear the clear-ringing sound of the tárogató, the excited shouts of the crowd, and floating above the multitude we perceive the swing of colourful egrets. Then, surrounded by the retinue of bustling peasant lads, suddenly appears the recruiting gang. Well in front walks the recruiting sergeant, earnest of mien, stiff and important. He does not hop or click his heels like his men, nor does he sing,

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 but every one of his steps beats out the rhythm. He
702 swings his cane with the music, and, stepping out with coquettish grace, holds his sabre in such a way that his sabretache strikes his leg at every step. A few steps behind come the recruiters, surrounding the recruiting corporal, whose rank and importance is immediately apparent even if we do not notice his hazel cane or the braiding of his shako. His bearing is officious and haughty. It is as though he were floating forward with his well-marked elastic steps. He is not so composed as the sergeant, but not quite so hilarious as are the common recruiters. His deportment is smart, and his simple, yet expressive movements are closely followed by those under him; he is the master of the dance. The recruiters follow him with a nonchalant but nevertheless smart demeanour. They click their heels, and clap their hands while they beat out their sharp, ornamented steps. They walk round the market-place until the best spot is found, and the sergeant signals to them to stop. They form a circle with the corporal in the middle; then to the tunes played by a uniformed gypsy orchestra the recruiting-dance begins. There are no dance-steps during the first few verses, which only help the men to get the measure by clicking their spurs or by simply walking round the dancing-circle. Then we see a few dance-steps, either conventional ones or some designated by the corporal whom they watch closely, at the same time keeping an eye on their *vis-à-vis* as well. This part of the dance mostly follows in a determined order, and the opening steps are rather simple. If the measure of the song is of eight beats, then two steps are made to the right, one to the left, again two to the right,

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



one to the left, concluded by a double step, bringing the dancers back to position.

This part is repeated five or six times and is followed by the "ornamental", which is livelier and more impetuous than the preceding part. In the "ornamental", vigorous leaps upward and in all directions are well in order; the accompanying rattle of sabres and the swaying sabretaches help to complete the perfect image of a truly heroic dance. Like the expressions of all violent emotions, the music and the dance calm down to resume their former stateliness and dignity. The whole dance is then repeated in the same sequence two or three times, whereupon the sergeant signals to them to stop, and the gay gang of recruiters moves on.[1]

From these descriptions and from all others we know that the Hungarian recruiting-dance can be visualised vividly. The descriptions themselves, and the fact that any lively peasant lad could dance along with the recruiters — often the best of these joined in a recruiting squad as recruiters on the spot — prove conclusively that the recruiting-dance was nothing else but the somewhat regulated and solemnized group-version of the "slow" and "ornamental" men's dances themselves — that is, the man's part in the Hungarian folk-dance. In keeping with the occasion, it was performed with stress on the spectacular and danced with exceptional grace and dig-

[1] In one of his poems Czuczor describes the beginning of the recruiting dance somewhat differently: "The music is on, let us start; let us click our heels in perfect unison, then make three light jumps to the right, then three to the left, and beat out the rhythm of the music with our spurs." As a matter of fact there were as many variations of the recruiting dance as there were recruiting gangs, although really they were always the same.

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 nity, as one could expect from such excellent dancers as
702 the recruiters were.

The recruiting-dance carried its importance and its attraction in the appeal to that craving for importance, that yearning for the unusual which lies hidden in every one. By stirring, intoxicating, and exalting the dancer, it attained its purpose. Today as ever, the good peasant dancer feels, and as a matter of fact is considered by his fellow villagers, superior. The very best dancers only can take part in the recruiting-dance, under the leadership of the outstanding dancer who is known as the recruiting master, wherever it is still done.

The institution of recruiting was discontinued with the introduction of general conscription in Hungary in the second half of the nineteenth century, but the recruiting-dance as a glorified version of the Hungarian folk-dance has survived and is still widely danced in its more or less original form, by the best male dancers, young and old, in various parts of Hungary.

535 The recruiting-dance also survives in a somewhat corrupted local version in the Hungarian regions of Transylvania as part of the *Csürdüngölő*, the barn-dance. There it is often known as the *Legényes*, that is, the single young men's dance. A dance of this name is also done in some parts of the great Hungarian plain, and, like the other, is derived from the original recruiting-dance.

Barn-dancing as such has been an age-old institution in Transylvania. It is a dance by which the village celebrates the completion of a farmhouse or of a barn constructed by the co-operative work of the whole community. The word *Csürdüngölő* means literally stamping of the barnfloor, and any and all dances danced at the celebration may be classed as such. Practically all are some local forms of the Hungarian folk-dance, into which at

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



places foreign elements have also found their way. One 535
of the high-lights of barn-dancing is the single young men's dance, which has a pronounced resemblance to the recruiting-dance. The latter, however, was primarily a functional dance composed from the natural elements of the Hungarian folk-dance and featuring particularly its "slow" and "ornamental" parts, whereas the single young men's dance, while it is also a showy dance in which the onlookers delight, is danced chiefly for the enjoyment of the participants themselves. It is a round dance led by the foremost dancers of the place, but the leader does not dance entirely solo, as the recruiting corporal did, but with a partner whose role is that of a competitor. The spectacular beauty and skill with which this dance is performed are often amazing, as the leaders compete with each other, and the rest with their *vis-à-vis*, in an attempt to prove superior to the other in endurance, skill, and the beauty and variety of their dance. It is faster than the dignified recruiting-dance and, true to its communal character it gradually evolves into the general enjoyment of a dance in which couples of the two sexes continue, in accordance with the music, all the different varieties of the Hungarian folk-dance.

The single young men's dance *(Legényes)* of the Hungarian lowlands is somewhat different, inasmuch as the competitive double solo is danced generally by the two best dancers alone. It is nearly always a magnificent exhibition of the Hungarian man's dance. Often it is followed by the local version of the recruiting-dance or by universal dancing in which all present, men and women, take part.

Just as the recruiting-dance developed directly from the natural Hungarian folk-dance, so developed the most beautiful and deservedly most famous of Hungarian

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 exhibition dances, the showy couple-dance of Kálló *(Kállai-kettős)*. Originally better known as a strenuous individual exhibition of dancing-skill by a couple of outstanding dancers, it finally settled in its present form. The dance takes its name from the town of Nagykálló, always famous for its thriving Hungarian art-industries, the workers of which made up the bulk of its population. We have every reason to think that it originated and developed as the festive dance of the local craftsmen. It bears all the characteristics of the Hungarian folk-dance, but besides the pleasure and satisfaction the performers naturally derive from it, its secondary purpose has always been to please the onlookers. In keeping with its double function it gives the dancers an opportunity to enjoy themselves and to show off their skill in a dance which restrains, regulates, and refines — "spectacularizes" the Hungarian folk-dance. It is, perhaps because it taxes the skill and poise of the dancer to the utmost, a dance restricted to the few even in its place of origin, and there is no doubt that it certainly is one of the most attractive forms of Hungarian folk-dancing.

It is impossible here to deal extensively with the great many incidental, occasional, and game dances, some of which are original. With the flow of time and changing institutions, many have lost their original meaning or role. We wish, however, to say a few words on the "refined" forms of the Hungarian folk-dance encountered in the higher strata of Hungarian society.

Previously we mentioned that the Hungarian folk-dance is essentially the dance of the Hungarian peasantry: a universal natural dance surging from the innate urge of the Hungarian people in an extremely flexible form, which, however, is inseparable from Hungarian music and its characteristic rhythm. It is the festive dance of

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



the people, who, during the dance, feel free of the burdens 535 ● and restraints of everyday life. In the rural districts of the country, it has remained up to our days the common language of celebration with peasant and landed gentry alike, differing only in the degree of dynamism and refinement. Only in more recent times, since modern urbanism entirely separated the different elements of the Hungarian population, have the dance of the Hungarian peasantry and that of the higher (mostly city-dwelling) social strata become radically different. During the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century this separation was speeded up by foreign influences and the swing of fashion towards the mannerisms of the Royal and Imperial Court of Vienna. Not until the wave of nationalistic feeling which developed in the 1830's and 1840's, in the wake of the Germanizing endeavours of the Habsburgs, did the Hungarian folk-dance win again its social rights. But this revived and "refined" Hungarian dance turned out to be something very different from its original model, particularly in the pedantic hands of the foreign ballet-masters of Hungarian aristocrats and in the interpretation of the mostly foreign dancing-masters of urbane citizenry.

The affectations and mannerisms, the exaggerated languor in the "slow" and the altogether overdone speed in the "fast" parts, make it a caricature rather than a refined twin version of the original Hungarian folk-dance. This is also the case with most other Hungarian "dance-compositions", whether adaptations of the original patterns, as for instance the recruiting-dance of the ballroom, or so-called "original creations", of which usually only a fraction survive their first presentations.

Of all the imitation folk-dances, the Csárdás alone became lasting and popular: popular to such an extent

11: Karolyi E-4, 5 (no date) 1931? EC1 Hungary EC1



535 that it became known abroad, and even in the mind of the average Hungarian city-dweller, as the authentic Hungarian national dance, which, however it is not. Among more than sixty names by which the Hungarian peasantry knows its dances, vainly do we try to find the name of Csárdás. Its originators were a group of patriotic Hungarian aristocrats who introduced it into the fashionable balls of the 1840's. While based upon the rhythm and steps of the Hungarian folk-dance and danced to the accompaniment of original or imitation Hungarian folk-tunes, it remains an imitation which falls far short of its original model. Living up to the expectations of its creators, it indeed became a Hungarian national ballroom-dance, but in its "refined" form it has been rather a travesty than a simplified version of the real Hungarian national dance.

Only more recently, with the national rally following the Great War, a rally intensified by the world-wide success of Hungarian folk-music revived by Hungarian composers, did the Csárdás as a Hungarian ballroom-dance, and other Hungarian dance-creations show considerable improvement. The graduates of the newly founded College of Physical Culture, who are now replacing as athletic and dance-directors the old-fashioned "teachers of gymnastics" of another generation, and the splendid, truly Hungarian ballets mounted by the Budapest Opera, have helped to weed out the unaesthetic deformations of imitation Hungarian folk-dances transplanted to the ballroom and to the stage. Still the greatest influence was exerted by the Hungarian peasant-folk itself through the presentations of the Pearly Bouquet, which amazed both the Hungarian public and the mass of foreign visitors from all lands on earth by the dignified mature beauty and the artistic refinement of this most Hungarian of all Hungarian folk-arts: dancing.